

HB 6532

Statement regarding the statute of limitations in child sexual assault and child pornography cases

Sexual assault of children is a crime against one of the most vulnerable segments of our society. A significant factor in the crime is the lengths to which the criminals will go to conceal their activities. In many instances they use their position in the community as the gateway to their crime and their influence over the child or children involved to conceal the crime. The deceit and coercion used by the criminal to conceal activity that they know to be wrong is a significant factor in the damage these crimes cause.

There are no words that can fully and accurately express the feelings associated with the memories of childhood sexual assault. Guilt, shame and fear come close, but they are the feelings I have learned as an adult. They cannot express the feelings that I experience as a child, the conflict between what I was told and what I felt. The fear, shame and guilt I felt over what happened to me caused deep self doubt and at times an overwhelming feeling of my lack of value as a person. It has been an ongoing barrier to my development of trust and caring in my relationships since that time.

And I went through those feelings alone.

It was only many years later, as a young adult with children of my own, that I learned that the feelings I had were true. There were others that had spoken about what had happened to them. And I was able to add my voice at the time. Still lacking the physical evidence, he was able to evade justice.

Again, when the overwhelming evidence of the depth of Dr. Reardon's criminal enterprise was exposed there were still those that belittled the effect of his actions and the responsibility to help his survivors recover. This is not a problem that will go away if you stop talking about it. I don't believe that those that commit these crimes deserve to have the fear of prosecution removed from their minds. Memories of what happened to me will never go away.

Robert M. Farrell
child sexual abuse survivor